

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 EB-08 AID-05 XMB-02 NSCE-00
CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EA-10 FRB-03 INR-10 IO-13
NEA-10 NSAE-00 OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 LAB-04
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INRE-00 /101 W

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O R 221759Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7004
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 06039

USEEC FOR INFO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID FR XA
SUBJECT: GISCARD'S PROPOSAL FOR AFRICA AID

REF: STATE 041849

1. EMBASSY WELCOMES THE DEPARTMENT'S POSITIVE APPROACH TO COOPERATION WITH FRANCE IN PURSUIT OF THE GENERAL AIM OF SUPPORTING MODERATE PRO-WESTERN BLACK AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS, AND WE ARE PLEASED THAT UNDER SECRETARY COOPER WILL BE DISCUSSING THE SUBJECT WITH THE QUAI'S DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, FROMENT-MEURICE. FOLLOWING THESE DISCUSSIONS, WE HOPE IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO FORMULATE AN APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION TO THE FRENCH PRESIDENCY AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE QUESTION PUT BY GISCARD DURING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE PROPOSED NEW FUND IS PROBABLY NOT THE BEST VEHICLE FOR PURSUING THE OBJECTIVE -- AND
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INDEED THAT THE SPECIFIC QUESTION OF A "FUND" RAISES MANY DIFFICULT ISSUES.

2. WE RECALL THAT GISCARD FIRST LAUNCHED HIS PROPOSED "FUND FOR THE PROMOTION OF AFRICA" BEFORE THE FRANCO-PHONE AFRICAN SUMMIT MEETING AT VERSAILLES IN MAY, 1976. THE US RESPONSE AT THAT TIME INDICATED SUPPORT,

BUT IT WAS CONDITIONED ON FRANCE OBTAINING GERMAN AND BRITISH CONCURRENCE. SINCE HE DID NOT SUCCEED IN FINDING SUPPORT IN EUROPE, HE DID NOT REVIVE THE PROPOSAL AT DAKAR IN 1977. ANOTHER SUMMIT IS SCHEDULED FOR PARIS IN MAY. GISCARD MAY FEEL THAT AFTER TWO YEARS HE OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO FOLLOW THROUGH, BUT THERE IS STILL NO POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM HIS EUROPEAN PARTNERS.

3. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND RECOGNIZING THE PROBLEMS SUMMARIZED IN REFTEL ALONG WITH THE OPPORTUNITY PROVIDED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF US-FRENCH COOPERATION, THE EMBASSY HAS SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS. FIRST, WE THINK IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO RENEW DISCUSSIONS WITH FRANCE CONCERNING AFRICA-WIDE DEVELOPMENTS AT THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL. THIS USED TO BE A REGULAR PRACTICE, AND IT COULD RESUME ALONG THE LINES DISCUSSED LAST DECEMBER BETWEEN ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE AND THE QUAI'S DIRECTOR FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, GUY GEORGY.

4. SECOND, WE MIGHT WELL INDICATE A WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE AND TO INTENSIFY A BILATERAL DIALOGUE WITH FRANCE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS OF SPECIFIC COUNTRY SITUATIONS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO FRANCE, E.G. ZAIRE, CAMEROUN, GABON, IVORY COAST. DURING RECENT DISCUSSION BETWEEN AID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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AFRICA, GOLER BUTCHER, AND THE MINISTRY OF COOPERATION (STATE 018000) THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT TIME FOR EXAMINATION OF INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY PROBLEMS. THE EMBASSY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 06039

BELIEVES THAT A DIALOGUE WITH FRANCE COULD EVOLVE IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT MIGHT BE BROADENED TO INCLUDE OTHER KEY WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, YET PROVIDE FOR SUFFICIENT WEIGHT AND RECOGNITION TO GISCARD'S INITIATIVE IN ADDRESSING A KEY PROBLEM. IT COULD ALSO ENCOURAGE FRENCH INTEREST IN THE ANGLOPHONE COUNTRIES. ASSUMING THE POST-ELECTION ATMOSPHERE IN FRANCE WOULD PERMIT AN APPROACH ALONG THESE LINES, WE COULD ASK THE FRENCH TO KEEP THIS POSSIBILITY IN MIND.

5. A THIRD OPPORTUNITY IS OFFERED BY THE APPROACHING EC NEGOTIATIONS FOR RENEWAL OF THE LOME CONVENTION AND FOR REPLENISHMENT OF THE EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND (FED). THE US IS ALREADY ENGAGED IN A CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH THE FED, AND THE FRENCH SHOULD BE ASKED TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE EXISTING FRAMEWORK MIGHT OFFER NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR AN ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES WITH SPECIFIC ENDEAVORS IN SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES. THIS
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COULD AND SHOULD BE DONE IN A WAY WHICH WOULD AVOID UNDUE POLITICIZATION OF THE FED. THERE IS A PRECEDENT IN THE US-FED JOINT-FINANCED TRANSCAMEROUN RAILWAY.

6. THE EMBASSY SHARES THE DEPARTMENT'S ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE GISCARD PROPOSAL AS IT HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO US SO FAR. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT SUPPORT FOR A NEW AFRICAN FUND WILL BE FORTHCOMING FROM ANY QUARTER. WHAT WE ARE SUGGESTING ABOVE IS AN ATTEMPT TO RESPOND TO GISCARD'S CONCERNS, WHILE SIDESTEPPING THE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS RAISED BY THE "FUND" CONCEPT. IN PARTICULAR, WE WOULD FAVOR A MIX BETWEEN BROAD POLICY AND SPECIFIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTATIONS INVOL-

VING THE US, FRANCE AND OTHER KEY DONORS IN A FORM THAT
PROTECTS OUR INTERESTS AND AFRICAN OBJECTIVES WHILE
HELPING GISCARD POLITICALLY. SUCH CONSULTATIONS
SHOULD ALSO HELP INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WESTERN
AID IN AFRICA.

7. WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH USOECD AND WITH FROMENT-
MEURICE ABOUT UNDER SECRETARY COOPER'S APPOINTMENT.
HARTMAN

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